



# BOOSTING EMPLOYEE MORALE

*It's no secret that employees are at their best when they feel motivated. Yet all too often, employers try to boost workplace productivity through organizational or economic measures that ignore the critical factor of employee morale. Part One of this article examines some of the real reasons that people strive to be good at their jobs – or choose to leave them.*

## Part One: What Makes Associates Happy?

Ask any employee to tell you what they love (or hate!) about their job, and you may be surprised at the response. Contrary to what you may think, it's rarely just about the money. Most often, employees' satisfaction depends much more on the human aspects of their working environment than on the material aspects of their compensation.

Here are some intangible factors that can make your team more effective by inspiring workers to do their best:

- *Appreciation and Concern.* It's natural for people to want to be valued for who they are. While employees should certainly be good team players, it's important to remember that they are individuals. This includes giving each staff member the recognition and feedback she or he deserves for a job well done. It also means being sensitive to associates' personal lives.
- *Involvement and Responsibility.* Associates feel a sense of belonging and commitment when they are responsible for their own work. They want to own their goals and to know that their job is important to the success of the company.
- *Attractive Working Environment.* Employees tend to work more productively when their physical environment is comfortable, appealing, well organized and safe.
- *Community and Civic Responsibility.* Workers feel inspired when their company's civic values are congruent with their own. It's easier for employees to feel personally committed when their employer has strong ties to the community.

Part Two of this series will focus on specific measures that employers and managers can take to help cultivate employee morale.